

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of all pending claims (including withdrawn claims) will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Listing of Claims:

1, 2 (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) ~~An identifier assignment~~ apparatus for assigning an unique identifier to a communication device which uses at the unique identifier to perform communication, comprising:

a lease condition storage unit that stores lease conditions corresponding to the communication device indicating conditions relating to approval/prohibition of distribution of the ~~identifier distribution~~;

an initial control unit that, when ~~the~~ a distribution request information is received from the communication device, approves the identifier distribution to the communication device and stores initial lease conditions corresponding to the communication device into the lease condition storage unit, if the lease conditions corresponding to the communication device are not stored in the lease condition storage unit;

a condition modification unit that modifies the lease conditions corresponding to the communication device stored in the lease condition storage unit;

and an identifier distribution approval/prohibition control unit that controls approval/prohibition of the identifier distribution to the communication device ~~as a transmission source of the distribution request information~~, based on the lease conditions corresponding to the communication device stored in the lease condition storage unit,

wherein the lease conditions include a period of time during which the identifier can be distributed, and

wherein the condition modification unit includes:

a unit that automatically determines, at predetermined intervals, whether or not the period of time is satisfied; and

a unit that deletes from the lease condition storage unit those lease conditions for which it is determined that the period of time is not satisfied.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) ~~An identifier assignment~~The apparatus according to Claim 3, in which the condition modification unit includes a unit that modifies the initial lease conditions corresponding to the communication device to a set of normal lease conditions in which the identifier distribution is determined in advance based on information relating to execution of specific processing from the communication device.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~An identifier assignment~~The apparatus according to Claim 3, in which ~~the lease conditions include the term condition during which the identifier can be distributed, and~~ the condition modification unit includes a unit that extends for a predetermined duration of time the term condition stored in the lease condition storage unit corresponding to the communication device when the distribution request information is received from the communication device.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) ~~An identifier assignment~~The apparatus according to Claim 3, in which the condition modification a unit includes unit that modifies the lease conditions corresponding to the communication device stored in the lease condition storage unit based on the information relating to the execution of the specific processing from a management device.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~An identifier assignment~~The apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein the identifier is an IP address.

10-11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) ~~An identifier assignment~~A method for assigning a
unique identifier to a communication device which uses athe unique identifier to perform
 communication, comprising:

a lease condition storage step of storing lease conditions corresponding to the
 communication device indicating conditions relating to approval/prohibition of distribution of the
~~identifier distribution~~;

an initial control step of, when ~~the~~a distribution request ~~information~~ is received from
 the communication device, approving the identifier distribution to the communication device and
 storing initial lease conditions corresponding to the communication device by the lease condition
 storage step, if the lease conditions corresponding to the communication device are not stored
 by the lease condition storage step;

a condition modification step of modifying the lease conditions corresponding to the
 communication device stored by the lease condition storage step; and

an identifier distribution approval/prohibition control step of controlling
 approval/prohibition of the identifier distribution to the communication device ~~as a transmission~~
~~source of the distribution request information~~, based on the lease conditions corresponding to
 the communication device stored by the lease condition storage step,

wherein the lease conditions include a period of time during which the identifier can be
distributed, and

wherein the condition modification unit includes:

a unit that automatically determines, at predetermined intervals, whether or not the
period of time is satisfied; and

a unit that deletes from the lease condition storage unit those lease conditions for which
it is determined that the period of time is not satisfied.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) ~~An identifier assignment~~The method according to Claim 12,
 in which the condition modification step includes a step of modifying the initial lease conditions
 corresponding to the communication device to a set of normal lease conditions in which the
 identifier distribution is determined in advance based on information relating to execution of
 specific processing from the communication device.

15. (Currently Amended) ~~An identifier assignment~~The method according to Claim 12, in which ~~the lease conditions include the term condition during which the identifier can be distributed, and~~ the condition modification step includes a step of extending for a predetermined duration of time the term condition stored by the lease condition storage step corresponding to the communication device when the distribution request information is received from the communication device.

16-17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A storage medium storing a program for assigning ~~a~~a unique identifier to a communication device which uses ~~a~~the unique identifier to perform communication, the program comprising:

a lease condition storage step of storing lease conditions corresponding to the communication device indicating conditions relating to approval/prohibition of distribution of the identifier ~~distribution~~;

an initial control step of, when ~~the~~a distribution request information is received from the communication device, approving the identifier distribution to the communication device and storing initial lease conditions corresponding to the communication device by the lease condition storage step, if the lease conditions corresponding to the communication device are not stored by the lease condition storage step;

a condition modification step of modifying the lease conditions corresponding to the communication device stored by the lease condition storage step; and

an identifier distribution approval/prohibition control step of controlling approval/prohibition of the identifier distribution to the communication device ~~as a transmission source of the distribution request information~~, based on the lease conditions corresponding to the communication device stored by the lease condition storage step,

wherein the lease conditions include a period of time during which the identifier can be distributed, and

wherein the condition modification unit includes:

a unit that automatically determines, at predetermined intervals, whether or not the period of time is satisfied; and

a unit that deletes from the lease condition storage unit those lease conditions for which it is determined that the period of time is not satisfied.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) ~~A storage~~The medium according to Claim 18, in which the condition modification step includes a step of modifying the initial lease conditions corresponding to the communication device to a set of normal lease conditions in which the identifier distribution is determined in advance based on information relating to execution of specific processing from the communication device.

21. (Currently Amended) ~~A storage~~The medium according to Claim 18, in which the ~~lease conditions include the term condition during which the identifier can be distributed, and the~~ condition modification step includes a step of extending for a predetermined duration of time the term condition stored by the lease condition storage step corresponding to the communication device when the distribution request information is received from the communication device.